An Allan Quatermain Story Of South African Adventure

By H. RIDER HAGGARD

Couplings . Pages Screening Service .

PERSONNE OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS & SITTING target. After Queternain win told the corry is the New at that distance, always under a of a Engine mannar, at they tree, a hundred yards, I knew well that I was after a to be to take a new will could but a tea plate every shot, and come, a Postugues: Fin refuse, in a shoring ting accidents. I had little to fear Match Alias and our hard Foreign bet expense from the terrible trial of skill which have as a chest. Alias and Marie terrible trial of skill which have a school. Maron sample release his consent and lay before the Again and again I printings to take Marie with him one a time may a covered the hovering blinds with my ion to mother part of Sortic Atrica. The Signal poffer, feeting that if I presented the Allace usely arrive with the trigger I amount have placed there letens since save the emigrants from startation or spate of this reson Na say refuse to set up through and Marie. The lower racity to wall, thought to. Thinkel well do shall become of ago. In the most little righted this grange for a long while, the who carry them to the Zuin Kom, that

The King seders them put to scale at end. Suddenly I heard a scuffling with the committe to gaze them so conducte that ground. Dropping my glance I saw that sheet there enture out of five on a wing Alian harm that the party capture were rushing in the party capture.

CHAPTER X.

The Rehearsal.

LOOKED at her and she. As a matter of fact as I found looked at me. Then I took afterward, the king voiture had ficethe double-barrelled plated tened on to his simb nowe, while the out of my pocket and gave dreadful companions, having select "It to her uther portions of his frame, were be"It is loaded and on the haif-cock," ginning to hang hack after their

She nodded and hid it in her dress chosen morset. Hans kicked and beneath her apron. Then without screamed, and I rushed in shouting, more words we kissed and parted, for causing them to rise in a great, flapboth of us feared to prolong that ping cloud that presently vanished

Followed by Hans I climbed the they had all gone, and the Hottentot barren bill whose crest was white and I were left alone. with bones. As we went I explained to Hans a plan I had formed. played well."

Then, at the summit, we went through a very grim little pantominis. I with two cuts in my nose in which Proceeding to the centre of the arena- I can lay my finger, and bites at my like space, I lifted the gun and ap- head-where is the heir? Look at peared to dash out Hans's brains with my nose. Good! Played well! It is to butt. He fell upon his back and kicked about a little and lay still, played. Oh! bans, if you had seen This finished act 1.

Act 2 was that, capering like a bush on the edge of the plateau at a should have had four." distance of forty yards.

larger than a mote of dust. The aasvogel on watch up there far out of bush; let us talk," he range of man's vision had seen the deed, and, by sinking downward, signalled it to his companions that were quartering the sky for fifty miles round, for these birds prey by sight, not by smell. Down he came and down, and long before he had reached the neighborhood of earth other specks appeared in the distant blue. Now he was not more than four or five hundred yards above me and began to wheel, floating round sinking as he wheeled. So he sank melancholy sight Being driven up with a bullet will be acquainted with mistake with the third." softly and slowly until he was about

be just before they pounced.

CHAPTER XI.

The Play

a bolt, only opening them again one, one of bout fifty years of age, ust before he reached the earth. Here he settled, tilting forward in than eighteen. As I soon heard, they hat odd way which vultures have, were of a single family, the grandand scrambling a few awkward paces father, the father, and the cidest son, and the salance. Then he who had been seized upon some ridicwful, stony giare at the prostrate in order that the king might take grasped the rifle to load it. lans, who lay within about fifteen their cattle. If them about him, all immovable, all that happened in Zululand in those ed. I had missed once more. sing, all waiting for something. days.

Presently that something appeared, the shape of an aasvogel which was nearly twice as big as any of the thers. This was what the Boers and the natives call the "king vulture." one of which goes with very flock. He it is who rules the roost and also the carcass, which without his presence and permission none dare to attack. Whether this vile fowl is of a differ-

whether he is a bird of more vigorous who was with him, and lid: rewth and constitution that has out- "Oh. Tho-mass, ask your brother, sast it is certain, as I can testify wish to be fair, I will give him a om a long and constant observation, little more time to make his magic though but by a little. at almost every flock of vultures medicine." as its king. When this particular royalty had ready as I was ever likely to be.

rrived, the other assvogels, of which res. I, however, did not pay partie- circles. ar attention to those upon the earth. eir fellows in the air.

ture. They all did what doubtless the rifle." they have done since the days of The vulture wh eled and sank, sank foul bird dead, stone dead, eight or "Ja, bass," answered the Hottentot Adam or earlier-wheeled, and then and wheeled. I glanced toward the ten paces from the bodies. bung that little space of time before Boers and saw they were all of them "Allemachte! that's better," said is an end. You did not put in enough seems that it is I who have won the On the morrow of this meeting we ners or he will not be here long to sey dropped to the ground like lead. on their knees. I plenced toward the Hans.





"Never mind, Hans," I said, "It is fixed my eyes upon the bird

Act 3-In the infinite arch of blue a present of some new trousers. Also, Before it bounced it bung on wide, its companions on the ground, if in loaded desperately, "Let us take that his sense of honor, as he understood above me I perceived a speck no a present of some new trousers. Also, Before it bung on wide, its companions on the ground, if in loaded desperately, "Let us take that his sense of honor, as he understood here is tobacco for you. Come to the outstreehed wings, is the others had a somewhat unnatural attitude, per-fat pig of a Dingaan with us. Shoot the word, overcame his wish for their bush; let us talk."

done, its head toward me. I drew haps it thought that there could be him in the stomach, bass; shoot him blood. At any rate, he said to one So we went, and when Hans was a a deep breath, lifted the rifle, got the nothing to fear. I leaned against my in the stomach, so that he too may of his councillors: little composed I told him all that I foresignt dead u on its breast, and rock, almed and fired, almost care- learn what it is to die slowly. Then "Search the carcass of that vulture had observed about the habits of the touch of the hair-trigger. As the lessly, so sure was lof the result. This cut my throat, here is my big knife, and see if there is a bullet hole in it." gasvogels in the air, and he told me charge exploded I saw the anavogel watched to see what happened. all that he had observed about their give a kind of backward twist. Next all that he had observed about their give a kind of backward twist. Next

The bullet struck the bird between and shoot yourself, which is easier." good fortune he found, not the hole, habits on the ground, which, as I instant I heard a loud clap, and a its thighs, raked it from end to end, I modded for it was in my mind to for that was lost in the general deinterest me. Still, he agreed with me thought that the built had found its upon the top of its fellow, that the right moment to are would billet. But alas! it was not so,

beard a sound of shouts, and looking the striking this air against the third, and 'als sail racht kommen' over the brow of the hill that faced stiff feathers of the wings. Any one tall shall be well)." the place upon his wide wings, and toward Umgungundhlovu we saw a who has shot at birds on the wing the slope toward us by three execu- the sound. Instead of failing the I loaded the rifle again myself, backs, were three men, one very old and one a lad, who did not look more

et of him. Scarcely was this ass- Having been tried and condemned ing. Being desperately axious to get upon my own part in the drama. | amalongui" (Kill the white people). overed for a few seconds, then felt erations, all their descendants and the bird, and heard the clap of the in hundreds from east, west, north, was standing in front of the party.

like a horse. Bass, you are shooting he was so much larger than the lated slowly. into their faces for they all hang others. with their beaks toward you before The king began to descend, deputed I will send her to search for the vul-

ent species from the others, or Dingaan called to the lad Halstead, inspired from on high! I understood while before he pounced with his head rifle, being determined that if he had your way," I replied. rown the rest and thus become their Macumazaim, if he is ready to try tures and never hit one, for each

verior, is more than I can tell. At to shoot the vultures. If not, as I time they would swerve from the in having a large a work large transfer a work large transfer a work large transfer a work large transfer and it took him our story.

This was my chance, and, rejoicing sight of death—then suddenly uttered. Allemachte and I told him our story.

This was my chance, and, rejoicing sight of death—then suddenly uttered. Allemachte and I told him our story.

Thus the half-hour went is not the property of the proper veriord, is more than I can tell. At to shoot the vultures. If not, as I time they would swerve from the in having so large a mark, I got the a wild yell, which caused every one, had finished, "this is a strange story, swiftly, and not a word did we get treaty about the land without further

Hans, stretching out their naked ture, appeared thousa di of feet above done, and, oh! its tail was towards almost straight into the empyrean. I growing speed. d necks and winking their brilliant me and began to descend in wide me. I lifted, I aimed between the stared and stared. Everybody stared, guthered-up legs, I pressed and shut till that enormous bird became, first a the heavens-dead! "Oh, bazs," said poor Hans, "this is my eyes, for I did not dare to look. With delight I observed that the only lose your horse, but now" something else—the noise of a heavy sight of man.

there with outstretched wings lay the Hans.

would be the moment at Zulus and saw that they were waton. The Zulus grew excited and the odds dead." of them, when for four or ing as, I think, they had never went down a little. The Boers

corner of my eye as I loaded again, another king in Zululand." Act 3—In the infinite arch of blue only a scratch, and I will make you. Its last circle was accomplished. Another vulture came; seeing one of "Good, good!" he exclaimed as he little. Perhaps he saw it, or perhaps

habits on the ground. When the ground was in the

"Good, good!" said Hans with a whilst we were still talking we turbed by the passing of the ball and base, make no mistake with the Meanwhile.

"Yes," I answered; "If I make no

160 feet above Hans. Then suddenly thouse the sound instead of falling the paused, hung quite steady for a soldiers, their hands tied behind their soldiers. ed noise, it drooped quietly to earth that fitted perfectly true to the bore and sat down near the bodies, pitch- Moreover, I cleared the nippe with Dingaan, "you have lost your bet, for ing forward in the natural way and a thorn, and shook a little fine powder you did but kill two vultures out of this waman is of age, and gives herrunning a few paces, as the others into it, so as to obviate any chance live with your magic, which was good of my country." had done that afternoon. Evidently of a miss-fire. Then I set on the cap as far as it went, but not good and waited. What was going on enough. Now you must poy, as I rese into immobility, gazing with an ulous charge of witchcraft, but really "Missed!" gasped Hans as he among the Boers or the Zulus I do would have paid had you won." not know. In this last crists of ail our. Then he stretched out his hand and By now other vultures were appear. fates I never looked, being too intent issued the dreadful order of "Bulala

HE execution over, I was they drop. You must get behind them probably to spy out the land. Down ture in the sky. Come back theree, his side. called forward to where and fire into their backs, for even an he came in ever-narrowing turns, till Fat One, and tell us if you find it." Dinguan and his chiefs sat assvogel cannot see with its back." he reached the appointed spot for the waiting for the spectacle I lot fall my hands and stared at plunge, and, according to the immem-waiting the King's word. I pretended waiting the King's word. I pretended my Fereira, twice over if you could have each other to food, as is, or was, the content of these birds, bung a started my Fereira, twice over if you could have each other to food, as is, or was, the content of the poor fellow had been originately and content of the spectacle. him. Surely the poor fellow had been orial custom of these birds, hung a to look at the ground, and cocked my it all now. While their beaks were to the south and his great, spreading spoke it, it should be his last. Hans

"Come," I gasped and began to his belly, showing that it had gone heavens, and they looked to see at to have your back set against a tree horses. I drew Marie aside, motioning to the home, and I looked to see him fall as what he pointed. I replied sulkily that I was a depression to a rock which I saw opthe others had done. But alas! he did This was what they saw. Far, far Fiercely Pereira denied his guilt,

"Not quite," I said with a bilt high up and alone, that is all."

this was a new excitement. Then I stared at me; I saw them out of the quick. Before they die there shall be wish to spare the Boers, and L not-

charge of them were driving up picked it out, for it was only hanging thrust them through with their as. see.

"Well little Son of George.

lans. Soon there was a great ring Such were the dreadful cruelties in the same fashion as it had descend to prey upon the bodies lost? He whom you call Macuma- by chance. I watched, and saw that among their gain hit that last vulture. It should As Pereira's eyes fell on me, I do cheered.

flash, causing the bullet to miss them. sight upon him and pulled. The bullet even the doored people, to turn their the strangest that ever I heard. If it thudded, some feathers floated from eyes to him. He was pointing to the is true, Hernan Pereira, you deserve Hans was aiready waiting with the you can all go home."

The moment, that dreadful moment Snatching the rifle from Hans, I not fall. For a few seconds he rocked above in that infinite sea of blue there swearing by heaven that he was inno- words, "this is a strange beginning "I do not know, Allan. You see, I rhaps there were now fifty or sixty of trial, had come at last; and oh! Snatching the rifle from Hans, I loaded it myself; nothing must be to and fro upon his great wings, then appeared a tiny speck, which his cent. And at the last fletief parsed to our married life, but you see it am not a lucky fellow like yourself. athered round Hans, began to show the suspense of the waiting was hard trusted to another. As I put on the ins of interested animation. They to bear, it seemed an age before the cap a vulture made its last circle. It circles, which grew gradually more speck that grew larger and larger as "Hernan Pereira," said Retief, ruboked at the king bird, they looked they

mere blot upon the blue, and at length Down it came between the Vrouw think you would be safer with me "Why should anything chance, ally if we are starting in life. So ing amply occupied in watching worse than shooting at the geese in I heard the builet strike, or seem to but a speck. Then it vanished alto- prinsion and the slayers, smashing than with these others whom you Marie? We are a strong and well when it is convenient to you to settle the Groote Kloof. Then you could strike, and a few seconds later I heard gether into regions far beyond the the lifted assegn of one of them and mem to have offended. Therefore I armed party, and Dingaan looks on Your debts I shall be glad." burling him to the earth. Down it suggest that you come on with us, us peacefully." vulture is a very conservative crea- "Be silent," I hissed, "and give me thud upon the ground. I looked and "Now there is an end," I said to came, and lay there a mere mass of But listen here, man," he added "I don't know, husband, but they with a sudden lighting up of his dark pulp and feathers.

between his chattering teeth, "there the intense silence that followed, "it are dead. Do you understand?"

ing his hesitation, lifted my rifle a

time I did not shut my eyes, but and afterwards cut your own, if you. The man obeyed, feeling at the have not time to load the gun again mass of broken bones and flesh. By still and see those poor Boers killed, itself, which having pierced the thick and I knew that Marie would look body from below upwards, had remained fast in the tough skin just by

ried to this man?" Meanwhile, the Zulus were coming the backbone where the long, red neck toward me, and the soldiers who had emerges from between the wings. He Marais's people, making pretense to in the akin, and held it up for all to of age, Henri Marais? Don't stand there like a horse with the staggers.

said Dingsan. "His magic has con. but tell me; is she not of age?" ffed quered, though by but a very little. mazahn, take these Boers, they

CHAPTER XII. Retief Asks a Favor.

the help of Providence 1 the help of Providence 1 was enabled to rescue all they open they sank, to die. Indeed, not content with thus of them. Again I covered it dead was in progress, which threatened to they are they sank to destroying the heads of the tribe, and broads of the tribe, and tribe tribe, and tribe tribe tribe, and tribe tribe tribe. they wheeled, always from east to destroying the heads of the tribe, and pressed. Again as the gun ex- danger to them. At any sate, al- Some of the soldiers made a dash forth on our lourney and in time est, the way the sun travels. They present and to come, for three gen- ploded I saw that backward furch of though by this time they had collected and seized the Vrouw Prinsipe, who reached a river bank where we met a Dutch caravan, headed by P lettef. ike stones, pitched on to their beaks, collaterals had already been wiped air upon its wings. Then-ch horror! and south, and were wheeling the "Walt a little, King," she called out who was on his way to Dingam's scovered themselves, waddled for- out by Dingan, so that he might this assessed turned quietly, and beavens above in their vast, majestic as the assessed were lifted over her, Kraal upon a diplomat mission. With rard into line, and sat gazing at pose as sole heir to the family cattle. began to mount the ladder of the sky circles, none of them seemed to care "How do you know that the bet is him was Pereira, whom he had met thing to do."

So we kisse

number was that great king bird be searched for before you kill us." not think I ever saw a, man's face "Bas," he said, "those assvogels which had bitten Hans in the face, it "What does the old woman say?" change more completely. His Jaw see the flash of the gun and shy at it was easy to distinguish him, because asked Dingaan, and Halstead trans- dropped, the color left his cheeks. leaving them of the yellow which is "True," said Dingaan. "Well, now common to persons of Portuguese

> "Alian Quatermain!" he ejaculated. find a simple but bounteous feast pre- bear malice." The soldiers lifted their assegais, "Why, I thought that you were dead." "As I should have been, Mynheer pared, of which we partook, helping

> > "What do you mean, Allan?" broke

know why it is, but no one seems to were happier about your journey. I It was the king vulture failing from want you as a companion. Indeed, to fear Dingaan, and if anything should Bay trek, I want money." speak truth, I don't myself. Still, I chance to you I shall die of grief." sternly, "if I find you plotting against say Hernan Pereira is with the Zuius, face. "I will pay you what I owe you. "O Dingsan." I said in the midst of us among the Zulus, that hour you and he hates you."

powder. Presently we shall all be bet, not you. I killed this king of forded the Tugela and entered the hate anybody," I answered grimly, for your intention," I remarked quietly, birds, but being a king it chose to die territory that is now called Natal my gorge rose at the thought of this looking him full in the eyes. Later I heard that Retief, sarifying man and his treacheries.

By HOWARD FITZALAN story by Dingane, ordered Pare. "Visuo Principa." I sailed to the to name bither and listen. Marie, do you listen also, if by chance I should hear anything affecting your safety, and send you a message by anitie one you can trust, such as that

country on possity of death.

serving both her and one.

whom aroud behind her

who exclatmed:

Marais?"

was ready to ride.

you, my dear?"

"No," said Marnts softly.

but it doesn't matter, for she is of

age and can give herself. Is she not

"I believe so," he answered in the

self to be married to this man, don't

the last couple that ever I mean to

"Yes," answered Marie.

we were man and wife.

and even Marie emiled.

marked by a piece of grass.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Council.

Dingain to conclude a land will obey it without question." trenty for the Boers. And i "Of rourse I will also you, bushand, had promised to go slong. Have I not furt sworn to do so?" But I repented my pledge Marie said with a and mark-

you should remove pourselves size.

CTIEF was going again to where or hole, promise me that you

when I found he was to set out on the "And so will i, Aline," soul the very day that Marie should come of group; "not because I have aware age—the day we had set for our wed- anythory, but because I have you sing. Yet ins word was given. He have a good head on your shoulders. It was arranged that she and I should, and so will my man and the others matte before 1 set forth. We arard of our party. Though why you should Marais to allow us to marry somer, think you will have any message to but he refused, flying into a rage, and send I can't guess. Look! They are Our wedding day dawned, and the Marie, let us see them off."

whole camp flocked to the ceremony. So we went to where the commislettef, as commandant, was to read sion was gathered on horseback, just in time to hear Retief addressing the Marce was clothed in a soft white people, or, rather, the last of his own made of some simple but be words

oming stuff, and she were upon her "Friends," he said "we go upon an dark hair a wrenth woven by the important business from which & hope other maidens in the comp, a levy of we shall return happily within a very ittle time. Still, this is a rough Now we were face to face. Our country, and we have to deal with yes met, and oh! hers were full of rough people. Therefore my advice we and trust. They darried and her to all of you who stay behind is that williared me. Feeling that I ought to you should not scatter, but keep tospeak, and not knowing what to say, gether, so that in case of any trouble merely stammered "Good morning." the men who are left may be at hand whereon every one broke into a roof to defend this camp. For if they are of laughter, except Vrouw Prinsion, here you have nothing to fear from all the savages in Africa. And now "Ind any one over see such a fool?" God be with you, and goodby. Come, trek, brothers, trek!"

Then Piet Retief appeared from Then followed a few moments of somewhere dressed in tall boots and confusion while men kissed their men riding clothes, such as the wives, children and sisters in fare-House were in those days. Handing well, or shook each other by the the rife he was carrying to one hand. I, too, kissed Marie, and, of his sons, after much fumbling he tumbling on to my horse somehow. produced a prayer book from his rode away, my eyes blind with tears, market, in which the place was for this parting was bitter. She looked back at the camp, which was "Young man and young woman, now at some distance. It seemed he began, "what are your names?" a peaceful place indeed, for although "bon't ask silly questions, com- the storm of the morning was returnnandant," broke in Vrouw Prinsion; ing and a pall of dark cloud bung you know their names well enough." over it, the sun still shone upon the "Of course I do, aunt," he answered; white wagon caps and the people who "but for this purpose I must pretend went to and fro among them.

not to know them. Are you better ac- Who could have thought that quainted with the law than I am? within a little time it would be but But stay, where is the father, Henri a field of blood, that those wagons would be riddled with asseguts, and Some one thrust Marais forward and that the women and children who there he stood quite silent, staring at were moving there must most of them us with a queer look upon his face lie upon the veld mutilated corpses and his gun in his hand, for he, too, dreadful to behold? Alas! the Boers, always impatient of authority and "Take away that gun," said Retief; confident that their own individual "it might go off and cause disturb- judgment was the best, did not obey ance or perhaps accidents," and some- their commandmant's order to keep body obeyed. "Now, Henri Marais, together. They went off this was do you give your daughter to be mar- and that, to shoot game which was then so plentiful, leaving their famtiles almost without protection. Thus

"Very well, that is just like you, the Zulus found and siew them.

CHAPTER XIV. The Treaty.

UR journey to Dingson at Umgungundhlovu prosperous and without in-

There the preliminary steps of our treaty were arranged "All right, now for it," and, open- with no great difficulty. One of the ing the book, he held it up to the first people to great me was Pereira. HUS it came about that by light, and began to read, or, rather, who was a self-invited guest at the to stumble, through the marriage camp of the Zulu king. Dingaan had was enabled to rescue all service. At last it was finished; and just warned me, as a fine joke, that "So," said Retief, wiping his brow was forever begging him to find a

with the sloeve of his coat, "you are way to put me to death. "Good day to you, Allan," said marry. The work is too hard for a Pereira, effusively, as we met. "T layman who has bad sight for print, have just heard from my uncle that I Now kiss each other; it is the right have to congratulate you, about Marie I mean, and, believe me, I do so with

So we kissed and the congregation all my heart." Now, as he spoke these words, re-"Alian," went on the commandant, membering what I had just beard, pulling out a silver watch like a tur- my blood boiled in me, but I thought nip, "you have just half an hour be. It wise to control myself, and there-

fore we ride, and the Vrouw Pringloo fore only answered: "Thank you." says that she has made you a wed-"Of course," he went on, "we have

ad best go cat it."

both striven for this prize, but as you to the tent we went accordingly, to have won it, why, I am not one to

"I am giad to hear it," I replied. "T thought that perhaps you might be. custom with new wedded folk. Also, Now tell me, to change the subject. many Boers came in and drank our how long will Dingsan keep us here?" "Oh! two or three days at most You see, Allan, luckily I have been Thus the half-hour went all too able to persuade him to sign the sione, At last in despair, seeing that trouble. So as soon as that is dope

"The commandant will be very grateful to you," I said. "But what "Dearest wife," I said in broken are you going to do?"

with a wife waiting for me. I see

"We all do," I answered, "especi-

"Oh! I have no fear." he exclaimed every farthing, with good interest

"Then he had better mind his man- thrown in."

(T. Be Continued)